



Revitalising primary healthcare requires an equitable global economic system - Now more than ever

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Year: 2011
Journal: Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health. 65 (8): 661-665

Abstract:

The promised revitalisation of primary healthcare (PHC) is happening at a time when the contradictions and unfairness of the global economic system have become clear, suggesting that the current system is unsustainable. In the past two decades, one of the most significant impediments to the implementation of comprehensive PHC has been neoliberal economic policies and their imposition globally. This article questions what will be required for PHC to flourish. PHC incorporates five key principles: equitable provision of services, comprehensive care, intersectoral action, community involvement and appropriate technology. This article considers intersectoral action and comprehensiveness and their potential to be implemented in the current global environment. It highlights the constraints to intersectoral action through a case study of nutrition in the context of globalisation of the food chain. It also explores the challenges to implementing a comprehensive approach to health that are posed by neoliberal health sector reforms and donor practices. The paper concludes that even well-designed health systems based on PHC have little influence over the broader economic forces that shape their operation and their ability to improve health. Reforming these economic forces will require greater regulation of the national and global economic environment to emphasise people's health rather than private profit, and action to address climate change. Revitalisation of PHC and progress towards health equity are unlikely without strong regulation of the market. The further development and strengthening of social movements for health will be key to successful advocacy action.

Source: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/jech.2009.095125>

Resource Description

Communication: ☒

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change;
surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience: ☒

audience to whom the resource is directed

Health Professional

Exposure : ☒

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

General Health Impact

Intervention:

strategy to prepare for or reduce the impact of climate change on health

A focus of content

Medical Community Engagement:

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern:

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Low Socioeconomic Status

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified